



August 7, 2019

Board of Directors

Chair

Steve Dubiel
EarthCorps

Vice Chair

Todd Miller
North Carolina Coastal
Federation

Treasurer

Robert Stokes
Galveston Bay Foundation

Secretary

Kimberly Davis Reyher
Coalition to Restore
Coastal Louisiana

Peter Clark

Tampa Bay Watch

Tim Dillingham

American Littoral Society

Lisa Feldt

Chesapeake Bay
Foundation

Curt Johnson

Save the Sound

David Lewis

Save The Bay -
San Francisco

Jonathan Stone

Save The Bay -
Narragansett Bay

The Honorable Raul Grijalva, Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jared Huffman, Chairman
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and
Wildlife
U.S. House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rob Bishop,
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom McClintock,
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans,
and Wildlife
U.S. House of Representatives
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Bishop, Subcommittee Chairman Huffman,
and Subcommittee Ranking Member McClintock:

Restore America's Estuaries writes in strong support of H.R. 3115, the Living Shorelines Act of 2019. This bill is critical to help protect the multi-billion-dollar assets associated with our nation's coasts and estuaries, and the major local and regional economies they support.

Since our founding in 1995, Restore America's Estuaries has been a champion and leading voice in support of healthy and resilient estuaries for our nation. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, our organization represents an alliance of ten conservation, community-based organizations that span from the San Francisco Bay and Puget Sound on the West Coast, to Galveston Bay in the Gulf of Mexico, and up the East Coast to include the Chesapeake Bay and Narragansett Bay.

Healthy estuaries are the first line of defense for coastal areas, providing protection from climate change impacts such as sea-level rise, increased storm frequency and intensity, and excessive algal blooms. In particular, how we manage the vulnerable shorelines of estuaries will determine the fate of entire embayments. Traditional fixed-in-place bulkheads and similar infrastructure that are used to control shoreline erosion and protect property can actually exacerbate erosion and place ecosystems and federal property at increased risk. Research shows living shorelines can effectively mitigate coastal erosion while simultaneously protecting shorelines and allowing for critically important natural processes to continue.

Our long and fruitful working relationship with NOAA in community-based habitat restoration gives us strong confidence in the choice to place the proposed funding for H.R. 3115 into their hands. In the face of a climate epidemic and rising sea levels, the prioritization of disaster areas ensures that these funds will go to communities that are already facing the immediate and current effects of climate change.

H.R. 3115 will directly help to address the severity of impacts facing our nation's coasts and we therefore strongly and respectfully urge the subcommittee to move it forward swiftly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff R. Benoit". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jeff" being more prominent than the last name "Benoit".

Jeff Benoit
President & CEO
Restore America's Estuaries